



Pearson

Policy Watch

Your guide to what's happening in the world of education



The week in a nutshell

The parliamentary week began with **Education Oral Questions** in the House. One notable outcome was that the Education Secretary said the Government were keen to introduce their proposed system post-qualification admissions, even without the need for legislation.

The **Education Select Committee** released its final report on their inquiry into the education of disadvantaged white pupils, which was met with some criticism over its recommendation to stop using the term “white privilege”.

Education Secretary **Gavin Williamson** also appeared in front of the Education Committee, in which he discussed catch-up funding, exams this summer, and exams in the future, amongst other things. He also gave speeches at the Festival of Education and HEPI conference.

The **Scottish Government** has announced that SQA will be replaced and Education Scotland will lose its inspectorate powers. This is in response to the OECD's report on Scotland's education system.

As well as including all previous editions of Policy Watch, our **Policy Hub** includes our latest **policy blogs**.

Top stories

Commons Education Committee publishes final report following their inquiry in left behind white pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- The inquiry identified a number of factors which led to educational disparities for working-class white pupils – in particular, place-based disparity and cultural factors.
- Key recommendations from the report included:
 - Better data is needed to pinpoint barriers and areas that need more support
 - The Department should consider weighting the pupil premium for long-term disadvantage
 - A community learning centre in every town to support adult education for parents
 - The Department must reform the EBacc to include academic subjects and at least one technical, creative, or vocational course in Key Stage 4
- The report received backlash from opposition politicians and some educationalists for its criticism of the term “white privilege” with one member of the Committee, Labour MP Kim Johnson, publicly distancing herself from the report.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson appeared before the Education Committee

- Asked about schools wishing to demonstrate their improvement, as well as Ofsted "outstanding" schools that have not been inspected for 14 years, Williamson said he is "looking at a whole range of different options including accelerated inspection".

- Challenged on the amount of money schools are being charged by exam boards this year, Williamson said he "would be expecting exam boards to be delivering a rebate to schools at the end of this process as they did last year".
- Also on exams, Williamson said that for the 2022 cohort, an "extensive package of measures that was intended for this year's awarding session supporting youngsters as they took their exams" would be on offer and that there would be no immediate "switching back" to 2019 assessments.
- Williamson said that "in the summer, we are going to be consulting on proposals to strengthen the Baker Clause legislation", adding that schools could be "putting funding in jeopardy" if they do not offer colleges and other FE providers access to provide careers advice on vocational options to students.

Unicef have [published a report on closing the digital divide among children and young people for good](#)

- The report sets out a 10-point action plan for the UK Government to implement, which includes working with teachers and school to identify gaps in skills and support.
- Robert Halfon, chair of the Education Committee, and Siobhain McDonagh [penned an article for Times Red Box](#) in support of the report and its recommendations.

The Department for Education have [published information about the development of an accreditation system for online education providers](#).

- The DfE is introducing an accreditation scheme to reassure children, parents and local authorities of the quality of education and safeguarding arrangements offered by these providers. It will consist of 2 essential elements:
 - the establishment of non-statutory standards for online education provision
 - inspection of providers against those standards by Ofsted, acting as the quality assurance body appointed by the department

The Scottish Government has announced that SQA will be replaced and Education Scotland will lose its inspectorate powers.

- The move is in response to the [OECD's report on Scotland's education system](#). Education Secretary, Shirley-Anne Somerville has announced in a [written answer](#), that SQA will be replaced "with a new, specialist agency" which will likely be "responsible for both curriculum and assessment, to ensure clarity."

Pearson news

The Pearson National Teaching Awards This week saw the announcement of the 2021 Silver and Bronze awards winners. Once again, the awards are being covered by [the BBC's The One Show](#). Gold Award winners will be announced later in the year. To read the stories of these inspiring teachers [click here](#).

Pearson tweet of the week



Other news

Parliamentary & Ministerial

- [Gavin Williamson Festival of Education 2021 speech](#)
- [Gavin Williamson at HEPI conference: “Learning from the crisis”](#)
- [Baroness Berridge speech to the Sixth Form Colleges Association](#)
- [Education Questions \(21 June\)](#)
- [Education: Recovery Package and Catch-up Programme](#)
- [Professional Qualifications Bill House of Lords Committee Stage](#)
- [Prime Ministers Questions \(23 June\)](#)
- [Education Select Committee – Gavin Williamson accountability hearing session](#)
- [White Working-class Pupils \(debate\)](#)

Regulators

Ofsted

- [Ofsted: Further education and skills inspections and outcomes as at 28 February 2021](#)
- [Ofsted: HMCI Amanda Spielman gave a speech at the annual Festival of Education conference](#)
- [Ofsted: Changes to the publication of statistics on further education and skills inspections and outcomes](#)

Ofqual

- [Education Secretary selects preferred candidate for new Ofqual Chief Regulator](#)

Schools

- [Department for Education: £483m investment to boost and improve school buildings](#)
- [Department for Education: Education technology \(EdTech\) survey: 2020 to 2021](#)
- [Department for Education: Special educational needs: January 2021](#)

Further Education & Skills

- [Association of Colleges: New careers guidance collaboration with Careers and Enterprise Company](#)
- [Department for Education: Apprenticeships and traineeships: June 2021](#)
- [Department for Education: Literature review into online and blended learning in FE](#)
- [Department for Education: Participation in education, training and employment: 2020](#)

Higher Education

- [Department for Education: Student loan forecasts, England: 2020 to 2021](#)
- [Department for Education: Graduate outcomes \(LEO\): subject by provider 2018 to 2019](#)

Policy Watch

Week ending Friday 25 June 2021

- The Sutton Trust: Barriers to accessing postgraduate study
- The British Academy: Knowledge exchange in the SHAPE subjects
- HEPI: Student Academic Experience Survey 2021
- Centre for Education and Youth: Access to HE for young people with insecure immigration status

Scotland

- SQA to be abolished following OECD review

Wales

- Welsh Government: New actions to 'create space' for schools announced

Consultation Watch

Closing Consultations

- **Ofqual – Closing 28 June 2021**
Terms of Reference for EPRS in summer 2021
- **Scottish Government – Closing 29 June 2021**
Universities of the Highlands and Island Further Education Teaching Programme

What's happening in Parliament next week

House of Commons

Monday 28 June

- Westminster Hall debate – Relation to Black history and cultural diversity in the curriculum (Chris Evans, Lab/Co-op, Islwyn)

Tuesday 29 June

- Estimates Day – Measures to support education recovery

Wednesday 30 June

- Westminster Hall debate – Support for education of children from low income families (Tan Singh Dhesi, Lab, Slough)

Commons Committees

Tuesday 29 June

- Education Committee: Education Recovery (feat. Sir Kevan Collins)

Thursday 01 July

- Welsh Affairs Committee: One-off session on issues facing Welsh university sector

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